

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I returned home, like all of my colleagues, to my district in August. And what did I find in my hometown of San Diego? In a word, disaster.

San Diego is the first area of California to fully deregulate its electrical utility industry. The result is that in just 3 months the double and tripling of electrical rates by the price-gouging electrical generators; seniors on fixed incomes wondering whether to turn up their air conditioning or pay for their medicines; small businesses wondering how long they can hold out; hospitals, libraries, youth centers, schools, the military, all their budgets thrown into turmoil.

While the State legislature has just administered a Band-Aid to stop the bleeding, we need stronger and longer-lasting action. I am asking the House today to pass legislation to roll back the wholesale rates for electricity in the western region and roll those back retroactively. Those who have gouged our consumers for more than \$350 million in the last 3 months should pay the bill for their actions.

We need to take this action now. So, my colleagues, welcome back, but look closely at San Diego. We are the poster children for the nation. Many of my colleagues have deregulation bills in their States and we have deregulation bills on our floor. Deregulation cannot work when the basic commodity is controlled by monopolies. Take heed, Congress.

#### DEATH TAX OVERRIDE

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Madam Speaker, author Pearl S. Buck once wrote, "Our society must make it right and possible for old people not to fear the young or to be deserted by them, for the test of a civilization is the way that it cares for its helpless members." Yet our Nation's tax policies do desert the elderly.

The IRS bureaucrats tax seniors who work, scrimp, and save all their lives to build a business or a family farm. Their property and profits are taxed yearly. They even pay taxes on their employees. And what is the result? Upon the death of the owner, a successful business is hit with a death tax of up to 55 percent of the business' worth. Most family businesses cannot survive such crippling taxes, and families are forced to sell.

The death tax is uncivilized. Let us override the Clinton veto of the death tax.

#### CONGRESS SHOULD LOOK INTO CHINESE MONEY LAUNDERING SCHEME AND ATTORNEY GENERAL'S REFUSAL TO INVESTIGATE

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Madam Speaker, something stinks. First it was the Chinese general, then it was the Chinese Communist party, and then along came another 96 Chinese nationals. And they all had one thing in common: They all made illegal contributions to the Democratic National Committee.

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And after all that, the Justice Department said no investigation is warranted.

Now, if that was not enough to tip off Barney Fife, my colleagues, task force chairmen LaBella and Conrad and FBI Director Louis Freeh all recommended an independent counsel for the matter and Janet Reno said no. She said no three times, my colleagues.

Beam me up.

Janet Reno has betrayed America.

Congress should demand immediately an investigation into both this Chinese money laundry business and, number two, Janet Reno.

I yield back the statement of the CIA that, as we speak, Chinese missiles are pointed at us.

#### ESTATE TAX

(Mr. EHLERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, when I was a young lad, I grew up successfully in two different farming villages. One had 800 occupants. Another had 200. And I became acquainted with the work of the farmers. They work very, very hard. They struggle to build their farms. They reinvest in their farms. And when they die, they want to leave it to their children.

But unfortunately, because of something called the death tax, established in order to finance World War I, they frequently are not able to leave that farm to their children.

The death tax can be as high as 55 or 60 percent. They simply cannot afford to pay the tax in order to keep the farm. They do not have the cash. Their money is tied up in the land.

We passed a bill in the House and the Senate to get rid of the death tax. The President vetoed that plan. He and the Democrats in this Chamber argue that this is a tax cut for the rich. They should go talk to some farmers. They will find out they are not rich. Their money is tied up in the land. It is not in their wallets.

I urge that we override the President's veto and make things right for these people.

The rich escape the estate tax. They have attorneys who show them all the ways to get rid of it. The farmers cannot afford to hire those attorneys.

I urge an override of the veto.

#### INTERNATIONAL CHILD ABDUCTION

(Mr. LAMPSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAMPSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today on my continued effort to bring to the attention of this House my deepest concern for the American families destroyed by cases of international child abduction.

Today I will share with my colleagues the story of Ms. Ildiko Gerbatsch and her two daughters, Naomi, 13, and Isabelle, 10.

In the summer of 1997, Naomi and Isabelle visited their father in Germany. At the end of the children's visit, their father failed to return them to their mother in the United States. After 3 years of legal disputes costing close to \$100,000 in legal fees, the mother now has full custody of both children, but only on paper.

Ms. Gerbatsch has only been allowed to visit with Naomi and Isabelle on three occasions. She has been mistreated by the German courts, who have failed to comply with the Hague Treaty.

Madam Speaker, I come to the floor for these daily 1-minutes because I care about families and reuniting children and parents. Let us make it our duty to place pressure on countries who are Hague signatories and who choose not to abide by that agreement.

I urge my colleagues to join me in spreading the message and taking a responsible role in bringing our children home.

#### SAVING SOCIAL SECURITY AND IMPROVING EDUCATION IN AMERICA

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Madam Speaker, over the last month, I held many town hall meetings, meetings with constituents across the 7th Congressional District of Michigan.

Two priority issues that seem to come from those meetings as a message to me to bring back to Washington was making sure we save Social Security, not only a concern of the seniors but a concern of their kids and their grandkids.

Secondly was somehow doing a better job to improve education to make sure every child has the opportunity to learn to their maximum potential.

So I challenge myself and I challenge my colleagues to give education a top priority, to get the money out of Washington and into the district.

In terms of Social Security, we must have provisions that make sure that that generation that works so hard, that did so much, that sacrificed, that saved string, that saved tinfoil are not deprived of the Social Security that they have been promised by this Congress. Let us make that effort.